

Waterfront Park, Ankeny Plaza & Street Improvements Project Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

April 4, 2007, 4:00 – 6:00 pm
Portland Development Commission
222 NW Fifth Avenue, Portland

Attendance

PAC members present

John Beardsley	Beardsley Development
Harriet Cormack	Waterfront Park Master Plan Citizens Advisory Committee
Carol Edelman	Waterfront Park Master Plan Citizens Advisory Committee
Lou Elliot	Bill Naito Corp.
Daniel Friedman	Downtown Neighborhood Association (for absent Jennifer Geske)
Jerry Marshall	Portland Rescue Mission
Chet Orloff	Portland Parks Board, Historic Resources
Carly Riter	Portland Business Alliance
Henry Sakamoto	Oregon Nikkei Endowment
Louis Wachsmith	Dan & Louis Oyster Bar

PAC members absent

Jennifer Geske	Downtown Neighborhood Association
Richard Harris	Old Town Chinatown Visions Committee, OTCT Neighborhood Assn.
Terri Warpinski	University of Oregon

Project team

Shelby Acteson	Portland Development Commission (PDC)
Janet Bebb	Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R)
Kevin Brake	Portland Development Commission
Sandra Burtzos	Portland Parks and Recreation
Chelsea Cochran	Walker Macy (consultant landscape architect)
Peter Englander	Portland Development Commission
Gay Greger (absent)	Portland Parks and Recreation
Barbara Hart	Envirolssues (consultant facilitator)
Joleen Jensen-Classen	Portland Development Commission
Doug Macy	Walker Macy (consultant landscape architect)
Ross Plambeck	Portland Development Commission
Mauricio Villarreal	Walker Macy (consultant landscape architect)

Audience members present

Jon Abrahamson, owner of Captain Ankeny's Well
Lou Bowers, Portland Development Commission
Lisa Hamel, Portland Saturday Market
Charles Houtchens, Portland Saturday Market
Fred Leesen, *The Oregonian*
Paul Verhoeven, executive director, Portland Saturday Market
Rhia Weinhaus, Portland Saturday Market
Unidentified Portland State University student in community development program

Welcome and introductions

Facilitator Barbara Hart welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC). Members introduced themselves and shared brief remarks in response to the question, "What excites you about this project and the opportunity to improve Waterfront Park?" Responses ranged from concerns about social problems in the area to an awareness of the great potential for improvements to the area. Facilitator asked audience members to introduce themselves.

Group charter and ground rules

Review of notebooks, group charter, and ground rules. There were no questions, but the group was encouraged to read materials before the next meeting. Members were asked to review their own contact information in the binder to ensure it is correct.

Project overview

Background

(Kevin Brake, PDC)

Kevin discussed key objectives and themes that run through many of the related planning documents, including: increasing coordination and communication among groups; fostering development of a nightlife and entertainment district; increasing availability of public restrooms; reconnecting the city to the waterfront; activating ground floor uses; redeveloping surface parking lots; and increasing the residential mix to create a more vibrant neighborhood.

He reviewed previous planning efforts and documents leading to the current project. Key elements of the *Waterfront Park Master Plan* included the Ankeny Pump Station as an historical element and how to make Naito Parkway a safer pedestrian crossing. The *Ankeny-Burnside Development Framework* looked at enhancing the district's historic character, while the *Portland Saturday Market Permanent Home Study* was folded into these other processes. All previous studies are referenced in the binder of materials and are available on PDC's Web site.

Kevin stated that the next step is implementation. He described the University of Oregon's future home in the White Stag Building as a catalyst, as well as Mercy Corps' relocation in the district. The Salvation Army and fire station renovation were named as other exciting changes. Bill Naito Corp. plans to redevelop parts of the area, which includes potential for more housing and perhaps the Oregon College of Oriental Medicine relocating nearby. Finally, Kevin explained that the project at hand is being led by Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R) in partnership with PDC.

Design Process and Timeline

(Sandra Burtzos, project manager, PP&R)

Sandra explained that this project is being funded primarily by urban renewal dollars. She distinguished between PDC's job as the funding agency and PP&R's role as owner of much of the land in the project area. The two organizations have a contractual relationship, with PDC

leading the public involvement effort with help from PP&R. Sandra introduced Janet Bebb of PP&R as the staff lead for all strategic planning.

Sandra said the project goals include designing and constructing park projects that meet the needs of all park users; making them cost-effective to maintain; fulfilling the *Waterfront Park Master Plan*; leveraging the Ankeny Pump Station as a northern gateway and magnet to Waterfront Park; providing open space and recreation for future residential development nearby; and improving the Ankeny Dock area to attract boat traffic and other activity.

Sandra said the project utilized a competitive design team selection process, which resulted in the selection of Walker Macy, a Portland-based landscape architecture firm located next to the project area.

She emphasized the importance in project management of scope, schedule, and budget. The *Ankeny-Burnside Framework* identified a need for \$14 million, but only about \$8.8 million is available from tax-increment financing. She did say, however, that private fundraising efforts are underway via the Portland Parks Foundation.

A project timeline was distributed and added to members' notebooks. The timeline outlines key tasks and milestones and the process of design and construction, as well as upcoming public open houses. PAC meetings will take place throughout the process. The main driver of the schedule, Sandra said, is the planned move of the Portland Saturday Market on March 1, 2008, which puts the project on an accelerated timeline.

Virtual tour – Design opportunities and constraints

Slide presentation

(Mauricio Villarreal of Walker Macy)

Mauricio showed an organizational chart for members of the project team and discussed their unique strengths. He and Doug Macy, the firm's principal, emphasized their plans to work in a collaborative fashion among the project's architect, landscape architects, and artist.

Mauricio showed a map of project area highlighting recent, current, and potential projects in the district. He showed a project site aerial photo stretching from just north of the Burnside Bridge south to the fire station. He said the project site is divided into five pieces, and then discussed design considerations, including a desire to embrace art and history, establish an iconic identity, and endorse sustainability. He showed examples of the streetscape and design considerations and spoke of the need to give the area a cohesive quality through site furnishings and materials.

The underside of the Burnside Bridge site was discussed as a challenge and an opportunity. Mauricio also discussed design considerations for the Waterfront Park site, including opportunities to make use of water and light to enliven the area.

Work plan and schedule were covered, with Mauricio explaining that they'll be working on three alternatives to be refined into a preferred design.

Kevin Brake of PDC coordinates the public safety coordination group, where the team will be developing a good neighbor agreement with all the private and public partners in the area. This will include maintenance and policing criteria to address social challenges in the area. That group will inform the Project Advisory Committee at some point in the process.

Remarks by Paul Verhoeven, executive director, Portland Saturday Market

Paul provided background on the Market. He said they looked at options for the Market and decided that staying near their current location is the best option. He emphasized how crucial it is to have the weather protection provided by the Burnside Bridge. He'd like at least the same amount of covered space, perhaps a temporary shelter that is easily put up and taken down. He sees the move as an opportunity to rebrand and enhance the Market. It would help the vendors tremendously, he emphasized, to have infrastructure – utilities, shelter, etc. – in place so they can focus on their products and sales. Doug Macy commented that he sees the need for shelter as an opportunity to create an icon for the area.

Discussion of design issues

Public restrooms

Harriet Cormack referred to the smaller, phase two project site area and stressed the importance of public restrooms. She commented that this project needs to pay attention to public safety issues around the fire station. An effective method of addressing behavior, she said, is to put public restrooms inside the fire station. This would maximize public resources and allow project funds to be used for other purposes.

Fire station parking lot

John Beardsley commented that they were hoping to get access to the fire station parking lot when it was still possible that the fire station might move. It would have been nice, he said, to take down the wall along the fire station's parking lot. Kevin Brake replied that they have expressed an interest in taking the wall down.

Saturday Market structure for weather protection

Chet Orloff said he is concerned that the architect has already come up with a design for the structure that will provide weather protection. He emphasized that this is a critical crossroads location for the city, will take a lot of thought, and he hopes there will be more than 15 minutes for the committee and the public to consider what the cover might look like. He said we should design something that will last centuries, not merely decades.

Doug Macy said that nothing has been drawn yet. He said they're thinking about how to create a shelter that is not a shelter, one that is not dumbed down or cheapened. It should be a structure of some substance and permanence. He said he would value the PAC's input on this.

Ankeny fountains

John Beardsley said that for years he has advocated for a fountain walk along Ankeny. He remarked that the fountains at 3rd/Ankeny and 2nd/Ankeny appear to have been erased in the diagram. He asked who's got the eraser. He said he has even offered to pay for one of the fountains.

Kevin Brake said the fountain walk concept has not been obliterated. The diagram is very generalized. He said John's interest can be carried forward in this project.

Lou Bowers added that there was a debate about the level of resources available. The real constraint is there's \$8.5 million of tax-increment financing money, plus whatever private money can be raised. There are many competing interests about what to prioritize.

MAX light rail station

Daniel Friedman asked if there is a way to take advantage of the MAX station location despite the relocation of the Saturday Market. Doug Macy commented that they expect continued activity at the station even after the market moves, but that the real issue is to make it a livelier, safer space on weekdays. Mauricio Villarreal remarked that elements providing a daily presence, like a coffee shop or newsstand, can help with that.

Lou Elliot commented that during the development framework discussions there was talk of relocating the transit station. He added that any discussion regarding the transit station under the Burnside bridge should include Art DeMuro of Venerable Properties, owner/landlord of the White Stag complex. The White Stag building includes the University of Oregon as the primary tenant, but also includes other tenants who may have a different perspective on this particular issue.

John Beardsley asked if it would be feasible to relocate the MAX station to the fire station parking lot. Kevin Brake replied that if you take away the activation of that area, it could create more problems. Lou Bowers said the discussion has already been had with TriMet, that the cost to move the station was \$1 million, and that a variety of opinions were expressed by property owners about a move. Chet Orloff suggested holding off on that transit stop until we see what happens with the White Stag building and others.

Funding and other topics

Lou Elliot said he wants to make sure the consultants look backward. The *Framework* contains less than was actually discussed. Go back, he said, and talk with those who participated because they had great ideas. Lou continued that he'd like to better understand the decision matrix.

Kevin Brake replied that the project outstrips available funds. He reminded members that the urban renewal area is expiring. He said priorities that rose to the surface to satisfy the most stakeholders were: relocation of Saturday Market, upgrading of Waterfront Park, and public safety and amenity improvements. Doug Macy said the project area boundary could shift once the team better understands the cost.

Kevin Brake acknowledged in response to Louis Wachsmith that staff have discussed the potential for a voluntary local improvement district (LID) to raise additional resources for improvements.

Chet Orloff asked if the project is confined to Parks geography or property. Sandra Burtzos replied no, it includes the streets, as well.

Comments and questions from the public

Lisa Hamel from the World Market commented that it would be nice if the area could undergo some kind of naming or branding process relating to the unique market district of Portland.

Wrap up and next steps

Members discussed the need for more time at the next meeting to look at draft concepts and provide feedback. One member asked if materials could be provided in advance for members to review ahead of time. After some discussion, they agreed that it was best to see the concepts together as a group at the next meeting.

A walking tour of the project area attracted no participants, and the meeting adjourned at 6:05pm.

Next meeting

April 25, 2007, 4:00 – 6:30 pm, an extended time if needed for discussion of design concepts.

Follow up items

- Send PAC members the presentation slides show at each PAC meeting.
- PAC members will check the roster and provide staff with any corrections.